



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 28, 2021

CONTACT
Kim Doddridge
615-519-1405
kim.doddridge@tn.gov

EQUINE PIROPLASMOSIS DETECTED IN TENNESSEE HORSES

NASHVILLE – On the heels of recent of Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) cases found in Shelby County horses, the state veterinarian is now investigating cases of Equine Piroplasmosis (EP) detected in a group of racing horses in West Tennessee.

On May 8, the state veterinarian announced two cases of EIA at a stable in Shelby County. Now, another horse at that same facility has tested positive, and an additional three horses tested positive at another Shelby County facility. Seven cases of EP were detected at the second facility. One horse tested positive for both diseases and has been euthanized. The other six infected with EP are quarantined.

“Piroplasmosis is preventable,” State Veterinarian Dr. Samantha Beaty said. “Horse owners and trainers must practice good biosecurity. Sterile needles, syringes, and all other medical supplies and equipment are crucial in preventing infection. If a horse tests positive for EP and treatment is not an option, the animal must be quarantined or euthanized.”

Movement of horses under quarantine across state lines is a federal violation. All states require EIA (Coggins test) testing and a health certificate for entrance. While EP testing is not required by most states for import of horses, owners should check with the receiving state for import requirements before planning to travel with a horse.

EP is a blood parasite that affects equines. Like EIA, the disease is not contagious to humans. Although it can be transmitted through infected ticks, it is more commonly spread by blood and blood products through the sharing of needles, syringes, or improperly cleaned and disinfected dental, surgical, or blood product equipment. EP is considered a foreign animal disease in the United States and any detection must be reported to the state veterinarian.

EIA is an equally dangerous blood-borne disease for horses because there is no vaccine or treatment. Transmission occurs the same way EP is spread—through shared or unclean medical equipment or blood-feeding flies like horse flies and deer flies.

The state veterinarian is responsible for monitoring for and preventing the spread of animal disease, as well as promoting animal health in Tennessee. The office works with private veterinarians, animal pathologists, and disease diagnostic laboratories to identify diseases and determine the cause of animal deaths. The C.E. Kord Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory offers pet owners and veterinarians testing services for equine diseases. Find out more about Kord Laboratory here www.tn.gov/agriculture/consumers/pets/animal-health-diagnostic-lab0.html

###